

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBJECT Production of High-Octane Gasoline  
at the Benzinwerke, Böhlen

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1. The Benzinwerke, Böhlen, now an SAG, was occupied by the Americans for a short time immediately after the German defeat and was later taken over by the Russians. It now works (March 1950) with a total crew of about 7,000 (including technicians, workers, commercial and administrative employees), approximately one fifth of them being women. Russian Director General Mokhov left the plant at the beginning of February 1950 and has not been replaced. The Russian Chief Engineer of the works is a man named Turovsky. Dr. Mecke, an ardent Communist and member of the SED, is its German Director.
2. Under German as well as under Russian rule, the plant has been engaged in the production of gasolines using the high-pressure hydrogenation process introduced by Professor Bergius of the former IG Farben firm. The basic raw material for the plant production is tar obtained from distillation coal (Braunkohlenschwelter, brown coal tar, rich in volatile matter and produced by low-temperature process).
3. The plant obtains the tar from carbonization plants (Schwelwerke) in the Soviet Zone, among them one which is located in Böhlen itself but is independent of the gasoline plant, and others which are located in Hirschfelde, Köpen, etc. Pressure applied during the hydrogenation process is about 300 atmospheres.
4. Contrary to what has been published in technical magazines appearing in West Germany, where it was said that the total output produced by the plant in 1949 by using the hydrogenation process amounted to about 220,000 tons, the 1949 hydrogenation production of the plant actually reached the figure of 350,000 tons of fluid hydrocarbons, to which a 1949 output of about 25,000 tons of gaseous hydrocarbons has to be added. The fluid part of the hydrogenation production is so-called automobile gasoline with an octane number of 56 without addition of tetraethyl of lead. The contact matter used in the hydrogenation process is mainly tungsten sulfide; molybdenum sulfide and a mixture of both are also used.

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5. The plant draws its supplies of tungsten sulfide from the Leunawerke as well as from the Badische Anilin-und Sodafabrik (former I.G. Farben) in Ludwigshafen-Oppau (French Zone). The last large delivery was made by the latter plant in the fall of 1949.
6. In the dehydrogenation installation of the plant, part of the automobile gasoline produced through hydrogenation is transformed, under a pressure of 40 atmospheres into gasolines having an octane number of 84 to 86. The addition of 0.3% of tetraethyl of lead to these gasolines increases their octane number to 97.5 and 98. The contact matter used in dehydrogenation is a mixture of 85% of  $Al_2O_3$  and 15% of  $Mo O_3$ .
7. Gasolines produced by dehydrogenation in Böhlen go exclusively to the Russian Air Force in Germany. A Russian Air Force captain and a Russian Army captain appear periodically at the Böhlen plant and take samples of the high-octane gasolines to the laboratory of the Russian Air Force in Dresden which approves or rejects the samples and gives delivery orders. Deliveries are made in tank cars by rail to an unknown destination.
8. During the last quarter of 1949, the plant produced and delivered 18,000 tons of dehydrogenation gasolines. The production quota imposed by the Russians for the first quarter of 1950 was 25,000 tons. It can be assumed that this figure was reached, since in January 1950, a quantity of 8,000 tons was produced, although production during this month was interrupted for several days for repair of production equipment.
9. The plant also produces so-called A.T. gasoline with an octane number of 92 from alpha-butylene provided by the Synthesewerkin Schwarzheide and isobutane produced in the Böhlen plant. The contact matter used in this case is highly concentrated sulphuric acid. The plant's average output of A.T. gasoline is 8,000 to 9,000 tons per quarter. A.T. gasoline also goes to the Russian Air Force.
10. The Diesel oil production of the plant varies according to Russian requests. From the fall of 1949 on, Russian requests for Diesel oil have been steadily on the increase.